



Kevin Murray
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SB 39 (Murray) **Permanent Absentee Voter Status**

ISSUE:

Under current law, registered voters that choose to be designated as a Permanent Absentee Voter (PAV) automatically receive an absentee ballot for all elections. If that voter does not return the ballot in any statewide general election – the voter is deleted from the PAV list and must reapply for an absentee ballot.

A survey of county election officials, taken after the 2004 General Election, found that of the 40 responding counties, there were over 2.5 million PAVs, making up 21% of all registered voters in these counties. The survey also found that over 336,000 voters or 13% of PAVs in these counties were removed from the PAV list for not returning their completed ballot.

SOLUTION:

SB 39 would allow registered PAVs to continue to receive an absentee ballot in all elections unless they fail to return their ballot in two consecutive statewide general elections. This measure will give absentee voters a reasonable opportunity to maintain their PAV status and continue the state's efforts to encourage and increase voter participation.

SPONSOR:

Senator Kevin Murray.